

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9212
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 3158

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT ZA
SUBJ: UNIP NATIONAL CONFERENCE: NO CHANGE

1. SUMMARY: THE ORCHESTRATED CHANT AT MULUNGUSHI IS "KK NO CHANGE," AND THIS CHANT ACCURATELY REFLECTS THE REALITIES POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY. THERE WAS NOT NOR COULD THERE HAVE BEEN A CHALLENGE TO KAUNDA AT MULUNGUSHI. HIS LENGTHY (THREE HOURS) OPENING SPEECH DEALT WITH SOUTHERN AFRICA IN FAMILIAR TERMS. ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT HE ADMITTED THE GRAVE PROBLEMS CONFRONTING ZAMBIA AND PROMISED IMPROVEMENTS. HIS PROMISE TO GET POLITICS OUT OF THE PARASTATALS WAS WELL RECEIVED BY THE ASSEMBLED THROG. ONE OF THOSE SECONDING A MOTION OF APPRECIATION FOR KAUNDA'S SPEECH, PERHAPS IN-ADVERTENTLY, SUMMED UP MULUNGUSHI ACCURATELY WHEN HE DESCRIBED IT AS A PRO FORMA EXERCISE. END SUMMARY.

2. TO AN OBSERVER, IT WAS IMMEDIATELY APPARENT ON ARRIVING AT MULUNGUSHI THAT THERE WAS NO WAY THAT KAUNDA COULD BE CHALLENGED FOR THE PRESIDENCY OF UNIP. CONTROL OF THOSE
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WHO ENTERED THE AREA WAS STRICT. SIX THOUSAND DELEGATES (ABOUT 80 PERCENT UNSOPHISTICATED VILLAGERS) WAITING FOR KAUNDA TO APPEAR WERE KEPT AMUSED BY PAEANS OF PRAISE TO KAUNDA AND FOLK DANCING. THEY WERE CONSTANTLY ENCOURAGED TO CHANT "KK, NO CHANGE," AND THEY DID SO WITH SOME ENTHUSIASM.

3. KAUNDA'S THREE HOUR SPEECH TO THE DELEGATES WAS RECEIVED,

IN GENERAL, APATHETICALLY; BUT THIS IS STANDARD IN ZAMBIA. HIS COMMENTS ON SOUTHERN AFRICA COVERED NO NEW GROUND. HE CONDEMNED THE BRITISH FOR NOT MOVING MILITARILY AGAINST RHODESIA AT THE TIME OF UDI AND FOR VIOLATION OF OIL SANCTIONS. HE DEPLORED THE WESTERN MEDIA'S TENDENCY TO PLAY UP KILLINGS OF WHITES AND ITS IGNORING OF FATE OF BLACKS AND TRIED TO JUSTIFY SHOOTING DOWN OF VISCOUNT (PLANE WAS CARRYING MILITARY EQUIPMENT). HE STATED ZAMBIAN SUPPORT FOR WESTERN PROPOSALS FOR NAMIBIA AND FOR ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS (AS A BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS) AND FOR ALL PARTIES CONFERENCE. HE SAID ZAMBIA WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONTRIBUTE FORCES TO A UN CONTINGENT FOR NAMIBIA. KAUNDA ALSO PRAISED FRONTLINE UNITY IN FACE OF EFFORTS TO DIVIDE ITS MEMBERS.

4. ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT, KAUNDA RECOGNIZED THE DIFFICULT PERIOD ZAMBIA WAS CONFRONTING BUT HELD OUT HOPE FOR BETTER TIMES AHEAD, ESPECIALLY IF TRANSPORT PROBLEMS COULD BE RESOLVED. HE PROMISED TO REMOVE POLITICS FROM THE DIRECTION OF PARASTATALS AND SAID HE HAD DECIDED TO RAISE THE AMOUNT PAID TO THE PRODUCER FOR CORN. (HIS COMMENTS ABOUT PARASTATALS AND THE PRICE OF CORN WERE THE ONLY ONES GREETED ENTHUSIASTICALLY BY THE CROWD.) KAUNDA ALSO CAUTIONED AGAINST GOING TOO FAST IN IMPLEMENTING WORKERS PARTICIPATION IN THE MANAGEMENT OF INDUSTRIES.

5. FOLLOWING HIS SPEECH, THE CONFERENCE ADOPTED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS EFFECTIVELY BARRING KAPWEPWE FROM COMPETING WITH KAUNDA FOR THE PRESIDENCY OF UNIP. THIS TOOK 15 SECONDS. THE
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OFFICER PRESIDING TOLD THE CONFERENCE, "THE NATIONAL COUNCIL APPROVED THE AMENDMENTS LAST NIGHT, I PRESUME YOU AGREE." PERHAPS FIFTY OF THE DELEGATES SAID "YES" AND THE AMENDMENT WAS PASSED. LATER, SOMEONE CALLED THE PRESIDING OFFICER'S ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE AMENDMENTS WAS IN ORDER. RESOLUTION WAS THEN READ AND PASSED ONCE AGAIN IN THE SAME FASHION.

6. AS IT TURNED OUT NOT ALL OF THE AMENDMENTS WERE APPROVED BY THE NATIONAL COUNCIL. AN AMENDMENT WHICH WOULD HAVE SUBORDINATED THE TRADE UNIONS TO UNIP WAS NOT ACCEPTED BY THE COUNCIL WHEN IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THE LABOR UNIONS WOULD NOT HAVE IT.

7. ON SEPTEMBER 10 A UNIP PARTY SPOKESMAN ANNOUNCED THAT THERE WOULD BE NO COMPETITION FOR THE UNIP PRESIDENCY SINCE NONE OF THE THREE OPPOSING KAUNDA HAD DECLARED THEIR CANDIDACY 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THE CONFERENCE AS REQUIRED BY THE NEW CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS.

8. COMMENT: OBSERVERS WERE LEFT WITH THE QUESTION OF WHY THE PARTY LEADERSHIP FOUND IT NECESSARY TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION TO BAR KAPWEPWE. IN SO DOING THE PARTY GAVE THE APPEARANCE OF

UNCERTAINTY OF ITS STRENGTH, AND THERE WAS NO NEED TO DO SO
GIVEN THE PARTY'S COMPLETE CONTROL AT MULUNGUSHI. THE ONLY
LOGICAL EXPLANATION APPEARS TO BE THAT THE PARTY HACKS AROUND
KAUNDA WANTED 120 PERCENT CERTAINTY THAT THEIR MAN WOULD NOT
BE DISPLACED. IF HE HAD BEEN, THEY KNEW THEY HAD NO FUTURE
EITHER POLITICALLY OR ECONOMICALLY.
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